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TRIUMPHS OF GRACE.—FULTON STREET PRAYER MEETING.

CHRIST EVER WITH YOU,

BY

REV. OCTAVIUS WINSLOW, D.D.

ILLUSTRATED BY EXPERIENCES

DRAWN FROM THE

Prayer Meeting, and Field and Hospital Life.

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CONTENTS.

CHAP.		PAGE.
I.	The Farewells	5
II.	Christ a Presence	22
III.	Christ a Guide	40
IV.	Christ a Shield	49
V.	Christ a Teacher	62
VI.	Christ a Saviour	71
VII.	Christ in Service	81
VIII.	Christ in Suffering	89
IX.	Christ in Retirement	95
X.	Christ in Bereavement	102
XI.	Christ in Sickness	110
XII.	Christ in Temptation	119
XIII.	Christ in Adversity	127
XIV.	Christ in Death	135

CHRIST EVER WITH YOU.

ILLUSTRATED BY EXPERIENCES

FROM THE

Fulton Street Prayer Meeting.

THE writings of Rev. Octavius Winslow, D.D., are known and appreciated over the whole Christian world. The author is known to be highly gifted and thoroughly evangelical, and an able minister of the New Testament. The little work, "CHRIST IS EVER WITH YOU," was published at the beginning of this year, and in the first quarter of the year thirty-five thousand copies had been printed and circulated—a good proof of the appreciation of the work on the part of the Christian public. The merits of the work justify the means we use to give it increased value and circulation.

We have broken the text of the author into chapters, and interspersed them with illustrations drawn from American Christian life. These experiences have been gathered from the Fulton Street Prayer Meetings and from the army and navy. We thus add a feature to the book which will make it more interesting and useful to the youth and children of our Sabbath schools, to the general reader, and to our noble and heroic men on ship and shore, who are engaged in the service of their country. We send this little volume forth with the prayer that it may be made the means of winning many souls to the love and service of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER I.

THE FAREWELLS.

THERE were two *farewells* of our Lord on earth, and they formed two of the most touching and instructive epochs of His history. As the sun, setting amid a flood of liquid gold, invests the whole heavens with variegated tints of beauty long after the majestic orb has run its race, so there clustered around the two earthly sunsets of Christ the most divine assurances, the most precious promises, the most brilliant hopes that ever shed their light and glory upon the pathway of the Christian Church; and which will linger upon its spiritual sky in deathless splendor

until He come again in His glory to set no more for ever.

The *first* farewell of Christ was when He parted from His disciples on His return to heaven. To them it was a time of inexpressible grief. To part with Christ was to part with their all. Yet He would not leave them comfortless; nor will He, beloved, ever so leave you. Blended with His departure was the most precious promise and the most costly gift Heaven could bestow or the Church receive—the promise and gift of the Holy Ghost, as the Comforter, Teacher, and Indweller of the Church: "*If I depart, I will send the Comforter.*" What an hour of blessing was this! What a glorious setting of the Sun of righteousness! What spiritual benedictions, what resplendent hopes gather, like a glowing halo, around the sinking of this Divine Orb! And still the glow lingers. And still the setting rays tinge with unfaded

light and glory the gloomy clouds which often drape in woe earth's pilgrimage. We have abiding with, and dwelling in, us the Holy Ghost the Comforter, sent of Christ, to lead us to Christ, to testify of Christ, to assimilate us to Christ, and to sanctify us to dwell with Christ for ever. Oh, could the personal departure of our Lord have been blessed and graced with an assurance more transcendantly great, precious, and glorious than this?

Our Lord's *second* farewell was when He closed the sacred canon of Scripture, fencing it with the most solemn warning, and sealing it with the most illustrious promise. And, as the threatening of woe to them who should either take from, or add to, the perfect Word of God, resounded solemnly on the ear, it was succeeded and softened by words which will live and linger in the sweetest cadence until the promise they contain shall be ful-

filled: "*Behold, I come quickly!*" *Then* shall all that is dark in providence and grace, be lucid, and all that is discrepant be harmonized; the bliss of the saints will be complete, the mystery of God will be finished, and God will be all in all. O believer in Jesus! long for that day that shall bring the Beloved of your soul arrayed in all His Father's and His own glory. He will come quickly, suddenly, unexpectedly,—His advent surprising both the Church and the world—the one slumbering in the light, and the other in the dark. But let us who are of the day be sober, watchful, hastening unto His coming, prepared as a bride for her husband—loving and desiring Him with a single, ardent, wakeful affection. "*Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!*"

But it was in connection with His *first* farewell that Christ spake the memorable and precious words—"*Lo, I am with you*

alway." It is not to a future, but to an *ever-present* Christ with His saints, that these pages will direct your thoughts. What the Lord has laid up for us, by what road He will lead us, what lessons He will teach us, by what discipline of trial He will mature us for present service and prepare us for future rest, we will not be too curious to divine. Enough that it is all in the covenant, and in His hands who administers the covenant. And whatever new lights and shadows may be pencilled upon life's picture, though our song be of *mercy* and of *judgment*, we will patiently wait and calmly trust its gradual and timely unfolding, assured that all our trials will be shrouded blessings, and all those blessings will be bright stepping-stones aiding our progress in the divine life, our nearness to God, and our meetness for heaven. Embarking upon a new stage of your pilgrimage, I propose placing the

pilgrim's true STAFF in your hands, upon which, if you lean in childlike faith, you will be firmly upheld, safely led, securely kept, divinely strengthened, cheered, and comforted every step of your journey. It was left by our Lord for the use of His one and whole Church, when He exchanged the scene of His humiliation for the throne of His glory. He himself placed it in the hands of His apostles, who, now that their pilgrimage is closed, have transmitted it to us. In the name of Christ, I now put this divine STAFF in your hand, and bid you firmly grasp it and set out anew for heaven. "Lo, I AM WITH YOU ALWAY, [*all days*,] EVEN UNTO THE END OF THE WORLD."

Let me for a moment concentrate your thoughts upon HIM whose promise is thus pledged: "*I am with you.*" Were you assured of the personal presence, ever attending, ever clinging, ever abiding, of a

beloved friend selected from a wide and choice circle; and were that one friend the most wise, the most powerful, the most true, the most loving, confiding, and sympathizing, would you not be content to link with him alone all your future lot—to make him the confidant of your bosom, the partaker of your every joy, the sharer of your every sorrow? *That* Friend is CHRIST! He occupies the preëminent position of being ever near to His people; everywhere, and at the same moment, His presence is the atmosphere that enfolds them, the shield that encircles them, the sun that guides and cheers their path to the celestial city, where His glorified presence fills each soul with ineffable happiness, heaven with its sweetest song, and eternity with its transcendant splendor. When Jesus left our earth, He entwined the personal interests of His members around His heart, and bore them with

Him to heaven; leaving the gracious promise that, though personally and visibly withdrawn from the scene of their journeyings, trials, and conflicts, His spiritual presence should ever and everywhere engirdle them, until like Himself they should exchange earth for heaven. "Lo! MARK! BEHOLD! I the Incarnate God, I who opened my bleeding heart for your redemption on Calvary, I who am your dearest Friend, your Elder Brother,—I am with you always, in all places, and at all times, unto the end of the world." Saint of God! this is the promise of promises, the richest pearl of all the promises, exceeding in its mightiness and preciousness, while it is the substance, sweetness, and pledge of all the rest. Christ is ever with you, and were this the one and only assurance of the Word of God upon which He had caused your soul to hope, you may gratefully and truthfully exclaim,

"Lord! it is enough! with this STAFF I will travel onward; and if through fire and through water Thou dost lead me, upheld by Thy power, and soothed by Thy sympathy, I will press forward until Thou shalt bring me into a wealthy place."

Christ's presence with His people was once, though not now, *corporeal*. He was bodily in the midst of His Church. Oh, it is a marvelous truth, the belief of which imparts a conviction of verity to the whole Gospel, that, eighteen hundred years ago, the incarnate God actually tabernacled upon this earth, trod its soil, sailed upon its lakes, drank of its springs, admired its flowers, bedewed it with tears, and consecrated it with blood. That babe of Bethlehem smiling in its mother's arms—that mechanic of Nazareth shoving the plane and plying the saw—that young man, pale and thoughtful, standing at Pilate's bar,—that victim of woe

impaled upon the central cross—listen, O heavens, and be astonished, O earth—was "*the fulness of the Godhead bodily!*" It is written by the pen of the Holy Ghost, and let no profane hand dare attempt its erasure —"*The* WORD *was made flesh, and dwelt among us.*" Yes! your flesh, O believer! laden with infirmity, sorrow, and woe. And He wears it still in a spiritual and glorified form, and is with you in suffering and weakness and infirmity, ever sympathizing, ever sustaining. Try your spirit, whether it be Christ-taught, Christ-loving, Christ-trustful, by its firm, realizing faith in this cardinal and precious truth, for, "*every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God.*"

In addition to this, there is Christ's *representative* presence with His people in the embassy, fulness, and preaching of the Gospel. The Gospel is glad tidings of Christ,

it is the message of His grace, the proclamation of His love to lost sinners. The Gospel is Christ first, Christ last, Christ midst, Christ without end. Christ is the *prophet* of the Gospel, teaching His people His doctrines. Christ is the *priest* of the Gospel, bearing and making atonement for their sins. Christ is the *king* of the Gospel, reigning in the hearts of loyal and loving disciples. Thus, Christ is present wherever and whenever the good tidings of that Gospel are preached, to "*bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captive, to give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, to comfort all that mourn.*" Remember, O thou neglectful, unbelieving hearer of Christ's Gospel, that it is not the minister you slight nor the message you scorn—it is *Christ* Himself. "*We beseech you* IN CHRIST'S STEAD"—as though Christ

Himself were pleading with tears and blood "*be ye* RECONCILED TO GOD." O blessed yet solemn thought, that, whenever my ears are saluted with the joyful sound, infinitely sweeter than angels' chimes, it is Christ's voice I hear, it is Christ's presence I feel, it is Christ's love that thrills and warms my soul, it is Christ's invitation to my weary spirit, Christ's words of sympathy to my sorrowful heart, Christ's promises of grace and strength and hope to my depressed and desponding mind. Oh, welcome, thou divine and precious Gospel! bringing with thee Christ's presence with a realizing power so personal, so conscious, and so soothing to the soul.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

We can bid farewell to things most near and dear to us for the sake of Christ. The

following was related in the Fulton Street Meeting, by a gentleman from Boston. It reveals the power which the love of Christ has over the heart of the young believer:

He heard a French sailor relate his own religious experience very briefly. He came into Boston from off a French ship. He was so bad, and wild, and undutiful, that his father had sent him to sea. He belonged to a rich family, and was "heir apparent" to a large property. He was well educated and intelligent. He went some time ago to a prayer meeting in Boston, where the place was so crowded that he turned to go away. But as he turned some one beckoned him to come forward to a seat on the pulpit stairs, which he took. That little gesture of a stranger's hand was God's instrument of the man's conversion. He said that if he had gone he should probably have never come again. He felt it to be a great kindness.

He could understand but little English, but he continued to attend. He found that the meetings were "all about Jesus." The more he heard, the more he wanted to know, and the truth soon found its way into his heart. He found that he was a sinner doomed to die, but that through the blood of Jesus Christ his sins would be washed away. At length, in one of the prayer meetings in North Street Chapel, he experienced a consciousness of sins forgiven. He wrote home of the great change. His father, who was a Roman Catholic, in his wrath disinherited him at once. But the son continued to write home and tell them of his love of Christ. He kept sending forward his letters, and praying for his parents; and as a result he soon had the unspeakable joy of finding that his father and mother, and one sister, had been converted. They have since written him the most urgent letters to come

home, assuring him of a most hearty welcome, desiring, above all things, to see him once more. "And he has resolved to go," said the gentleman giving this relation. "I heard him make his last address to that prayer meeting. It was touching in the extreme, as with eyes streaming with tears, he said, 'It was on this floor I was kneeling when Jesus spoke peace to my soul. I here look on those who first told me of Jesus, who first begged me to come to Jesus, who first rejoiced with me when I had found Jesus. And oh! how my heart is grieved, that I am come to bid you all farewell, to see your faces no more. The very boards in this floor are dear to me, no place is so dear to me as this. Will I ever forget these dear brothers, these dear sisters? No—no—no—my heart tells me no. Oh! I am grieved that I have to go away from you.' And then his voice

became almost inaudible, and his fine intelligent face became overcast with sadness; but all at once he seemed stirred with a new sensation. He smiled and said, 'It will be only a little parting and for ever meeting. I shall soon see you all—every one—and we shall see Jesus, whom I love. And we shall sit at His blessed feet, under the smiles of His glorious countenance. Oh! if I had language. Oh! if I could tell it,'—as he stood gazing up into heaven—'but I cannot tell how I love Him, and how I will praise Him.' And then looking on the wall, whereon hung the card, in large letters, 'Stand up for Jesus.'—'Yes, I'll stand up for You, blessed Jesus, though they mob me, though they strive to kill me, I will stand up for Jesus, I will never be afraid, I will never turn my back, I will confess Him everywhere, I love Him, and I know He loves me. All

power is committed to His hands—He will take care of me. No power shall pluck me out of His hands.'"

And he sat down amid a flood of tears, with all the audience weeping around him.

CHAPTER II.

CHRIST A PRESENCE.

BUT it is the *spiritual* presence of Christ thus promised and pledged to His people: "*Lo, I am with you alway.*" This promise of Jesus, as precious as it is marvelous, is predicated upon His essential DEITY. Were He, as some represent, human only and not absolutely divine, what confidence could we have in this promise? What comfort would it impart, what hope would it inspire, what protection would it afford? Where is the created being, be he man or angel, who could in truth speak in language so lofty and sublime as this? "*Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world,*" Would

it not be the utterance of the boldest blasphemy in him thus to speak, and would it not be the veriest delusion in us thus to believe? But because our Lord Jesus was God, He spake with authority, Godlike and divine. "*I am with you alway.*" Oh, sublime thought! there is not a world, a being, a spot in the universe, however remote, insignificant, or obscure—there beams not a star, there flames not a sun, there breathes not a spirit, there exists not an empire, where Christ's government does not rule, Christ's power is not felt, Christ's glory is not displayed. Could the believer take the wings of the morning and fly to the most distant planet, or touch the utmost limit of space, *there* the smile of Christ's love would illumine him, the accents of Christ's voice would cheer him, the atmosphere of Christ's presence would encircle him, the power of Christ's omnipotence

would uphold him—he would feel the right hand of Christ gently laid upon his spirit; and in the awful stillness and fathomless depth of that profound solitude, he would exclaim, "THOU *art* NEAR, *O Lord!*"

We repeat the inquiry for the purpose of pursuing it more fully: *Whose* presence is thus promised and pledged? It is the presence of CHRIST. The Christ of God. The Christ who *is* God. "*Immanuel, God with us.*" The Christ who made all worlds, created all beings, governs all empires, controls all events. The Christ who replenishes earth with beauty, heaven with glory, eternity with song. The Christ before whom angels and archangels, principalities and powers bend, and at whose name every knee shall bow, and every tongue confess that He is LORD, to the glory of God the Father. The Christ whose glory is divine, whose beauty is peerless, whose wealth is boundless,

whose love is as infinite as His being. The Christ who took your veritable nature,—that same infirm, suffering nature which now wearily you wear,—and in that nature bore and put away for ever your sins, uplifted and for ever removed your curse, paid all your great debt to Divine justice, sorrowed for you in the garden, suffered and expired in your stead on the cross, rose from the grave, irradiating it with the hope of the "first resurrection," ascended up to heaven, lives and intercedes for you, representing your person and presenting your prayers and praises with ineffable acceptance and delight to His Father and your Father, to His God and your God. The Christ who loves you with an affection whose depth no line can sound, whose constancy no change can chill, whose care of, whose sympathy for, whose watchfulness over, you flings as to the torrid zone the warmest, tenderest love that

ever pulsated in a human breast. The Christ who acknowledges Himself your Brother, has proved Himself your Friend, and who assures you that as the head is in union with the body, and the vine is one with the branch, so is He ever with, ever one with, ever close to you in an invisible, yet real and conscious presence, from which neither life with all its changes, nor death with all its solemnities, shall be able to sever you. Such, child of God, is the Being who breathes these gentle, assuring words into your ear—"*I am with you!*" O honored saint of God! O favored disciple of Jesus! who has such a one ever at your side. The Divinest in the universe to love you, the Mightiest in the universe to shield you, the Loveliest in the universe to delight you, the Dearest in the universe to soothe, cheer, and gladden you. Tell me, if, of all you have ever loved, or who have loved you,

the one who was given to your youth to love you more tenderly than all, yea, the being who loved you yet more deeply, tenderly, and unchangeably still — who loved you as a *mother* only could,— is there one of all these whose presence *ever* with you, you would prefer to Christ's? The question grieves you, you shrink from the comparison, and with uplifted eye, moistened with tears, yet beaming with affection, you exclaim, from the profoundest depths of your soul, "*Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee.*"

But we must remind you, before we proceed further, that the presence of Christ with His people involves equally the presence of the First and Third Persons of the ever-blessed and glorious Trinity. It is a *triple* staff we place in your hand, in grasping which, your faith leans upon infinity in

its *threefold* manifestation. We can have nothing to do truly, spiritually, and savingly with one Person of the Godhead without an equal faith in, and love to, the others. When Christ pledges His presence with you, He unites with it the FATHERHOOD of God, its boundless sources of love, wisdom, and strength. Christ came to make known the Father's mind, to reveal the Father's love, to bring home to heaven the Father's family, predestinated to the adoption of children. "*No man knoweth the Father, but he to whom the Son will reveal him.*" "*He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.*" That great God, that eternal Father, who thus spoke to His Church, speaks equally to you: "*Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.*" "*When thou passest through*

the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, the Saviour." Oh, seek to realize this precious truth in all your journeying: the presence of Christ is the assurance that your Heavenly Father is with you. Christ's voice speaking to you in love, is the echo of the Father's voice. Christ's smile of delight beaming upon you, is the brightness of the Father's smile. Christ's precious promises sustaining and soothing you, are the "*exceeding great and precious promises*" of God, which are "*all yea and amen in Christ Jesus, unto the glory of God the Father.*" It is a truth, equally as revealed and equally as precious, that the presence of Christ with His people involves also the *presence of the Holy Spirit.* Oh

that we had a more spiritual, vivid, grateful apprehension of the Divinity, personality, and gracious work of the Spirit, our Spiritual Quickener, our Divine Comforter, our Indwelling Sanctifier, our Infallible Teacher. "I believe in the Holy Ghost," is one of the vital articles of our Creed; is it equally the deep, experimental, sanctifying sentiment of our heart? Do I firmly, practically believe in the Divine personality of the Holy Ghost, in His official relation to my salvation, in His absolute necessity in regeneration, in His tender, changeless love as my Comforter, in His indispensable necessity as my Teacher, and in His gracious, sanctifying power, as ever abiding with, and dwelling in, me? Such is the magnitude and extent of the promise of Christ, "*I am with you.*" We repeat, it involves the love of the Father who adopted you, the grace of the Son who died for you, the power of the Spirit

who quickened you, the Triune-Jehovah,

"That triple bolt that lays all wrong in ruin."

Before I refer to the *circumstances* in which you may anticipate a full realization of this precious promise, let me remind you of the *offices* of Christ it involves, the *materials* of this triple STAFF which Jesus places in your hand.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Where two or three are gathered in my name there am I in the midst of them. We must have Christ ever near.

A gentleman said he had been several times of late on board the North Carolina, to assist in the conducting of the daily prayer meetings, which have been lately revived, and he had good news to tell.

Some months ago, every pious seaman, who was on board of this old ship, had been drafted and sent off to some other ship in the naval service, so that none remained to sustain the prayer meeting, and the consequence was it was given up. The number on board also was very small. It was thought best to wait till the ship filled up with men, and then it would be proper to make an effort to renew the meetings. Since the business men's prayer meeting convention, the desire had been much stimulated to go on board, and, with the leave of the Captain, resume the daily meetings. So a few pious seaman from the shore made known their wishes to the commander, and he readily assented to the request, to hold them. The hour appointed was at "two bells of the dog watch," which is five o'clock, P. M.

At the very first meeting the spirit of God seemed to come down with power. Toward

the close of the meeting twenty-four men arose and requested to be made the subjects of prayer. At the next meeting thirty-six arose for prayer, at the next fifty; and the last evening sixty signified their desire to be remembered in prayer. It is now a very solemn time on the old ship.

STORY OF A SAILOR'S CONVERSION.

I was in Boston, said a gentleman, a clergyman, and heard a sailor tell his religious experience. Now that prayer has been requested for these men of the sea, I want to speak of that man's account of his own conversion. He ran away from home when young and went to sea. He had a pious, godly mother, whom he had not seen for seventeen years. He often had letters from his mother, begging him, when he came into port, to come and see her, but he never would go. He was often under a

promise to go, but when he came home from his long India voyages, with one hundred dollars, or two hundred dollars in his pocket, drawn as back pay, he would go ashore and fall into the hands of the land sharks, and there he would be tossed about among them, until his money was gone, and then he would go to sea again to be gone for another long voyage. All this time his mother kept on praying, and writing to him, and still begging him to come and see her, when he should come ashore. This mother had been in the habit of praying with him when he was a little boy, but he had long since forgotten her prayers.

So he had gone on in a career of wickedness for seventeen years, disappointing all the fond hopes of his pious mother. One night he said his ship was overtaken by a terrible hurricane, so that it seemed as if the sails would all be blown away. He was

ordered to go aloft to endeavor to take in the sails to save them. It seemed to him that, in spite of all he could do, he should be blown off into the raging billows. In that terrible gale, when it seemed as if distruction and death were yawning beneath him to swallow him up quick, he said he thought he heard his mother's voice crying for mercy for him. The thoughts of his poor, praying mother came rushing over his soul. He listened, and still he thought, in the midst of the howling tempest, he heard the prayer of that same blessed, but neglected mother, praying God to save her son. Then and there it was, said this sailor, when I was hanging on for my life, to keep from being blown overboard, all my mother's prayers when I was a little boy, came up to my mind. I seemed to hear them all over again.

He said as soon as he could come down

from aloft, overwhelmed with a sense of his sins, he ran down into the forecastle, and there fell on his knees and cried to God for mercy. He confessed what a vile sinner he had been, and he asked God to hear his poor mother's prayers and his own cries for mercy, and forgive him.

He hoped he that night obtained forgiveness. From that time all his manner and his plans of life were changed. He came into Boston, a new man in Christ Jesus. The land sharks could not get hold of him. He had saved up his wages, two hundred or three hundred dollars, and he said he was going right home to see his dear mother, who for these seventeen long years had been praying for him; and whatever he could do, or his money could do, all should be done to make that dear faithful mother happy.

THE YOUNG MAN WHO WAS BORN AGAIN AT SEA.

He rose at the very close of the meeting. "I must speak," said he. "This meeting must not close until I tell you how mercifully the Lord has dealt with me. I was, as I hope, converted at sea less than a year ago. I am a stranger in this meeting, but I learn, from the exercises, something of those who compose it. There stood a gentlemen, a little time ago," pointing to a part of the room, "who requested you to pray for the young Roman Catholic Italian, who comes in here to learn what he shall do to be saved. And near me is the man who speaks of an awakened young man, near to death, who wishes to be prayed for. And then one of the requests for prayer asks us to pray for an awakened young lady, now in the room. And another said a little time ago, do pray for my infidel

young friend, who says he has been an unbeliever, but the foundation on which he has stood has all been removed, and he finds him sinking to perdition.

"Oh! hear me I say—I have been through all this. As you hear me now for the first—and will never more—remember that I say to every one, who is, as I was, a sinner: come to Jesus. There is nothing like going to Him, nothing in the place of going to Him, nothing but going to Him. So it was with me, away in mid ocean, and so it must be with you in the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting. I find just such spiritual wants press down upon the soul here as everywhere else, when men are out of Christ. I must ask you—I must entreat you to take sanctuary in Him and be saved. That is all I want to say."

There was an urgency and earnestness in the appeal which moved the hearts of all

present. Men forgot, for the moment, that the hour for closing had fully come, and, prompt to the minute, the leader arose, and asked the meeting to sing one stanza—

"I lay my sins on Jesus,
The spotless lamb of God;
He bears them all and frees us
From the accursed load.
I bring my guilt to Jesus,
To wash my crimson stains
White in his blood most precious
Till not a spot remains."

CHAPTER III.

CHRIST A GUIDE.

CHRIST is with us as a—*Guide.* How deep our need of Him as such, and how endeared does it make Him! So blind are we, so dark our future, so perplexing our present path, the very next step might be a false one—taking us into a wrong direction, entailing untold anxieties and sorrows, or hurling us from a precipice into total ruin. Yes, we need just such a leader as Christ. What Alpine traveler would attempt the ascent of a steep glacier, or cross the dangerous pass unattended by an experienced guide—one who knew the route, whose skilful eye could

detect the treacherous crevice, and whose nervous arm could fence the narrow, winding way? Our path to eternity demands just such a one as the prophet foretold Christ should be. "*I have given Him*," says God, "*for a* LEADER *and Commander to the people.*" His own gracious words corroborate this statement when speaking of Himself as the Shepherd of His flock, who "GOETH BEFORE *them, and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice.*" Oh, what a privilege —in every path of doubt, in every circumstance of danger, where human judgment is either warped or beclouded, and your own hesitate and falters—to have at your side such a wonderful Counselor, such a divine Guide as Christ! As such He is ever with you. He will guide you with His eye of providence, and with His hand of power, and with His heart of love. He knows the way that you take, for He has ordained it.

He knows every crook in your lot, for He has appointed it. He will roll away the stone of difficulty, will level mountains and fill up valleys, make the crooked path straight and the rough place smooth; this will He do unto you, and not forsake you. Oh, be honest and upright with Him! Go to Him first, consult Him first, acknowledge Him in all your ways before you consult a human oracle—let Christ, in all the minute details of your life, have the *pre-eminence.* Learn to lay your own judgment at His feet. "*The meek will He guide in judgment, and the meek will He teach His way*"—not *our* way—but "*His* way." We must first surrender our way and will before He will teach us His. The "*meek*" He will guide: the childlike, trustful, unquestioning disciple, that humbly locks his hand in Christ's and says, "Lord, lead me and guide me, not in my own way, but in *Thine.*" Oh, take a

firm grasp of this TRIPLE STAFF, and you shall travel safely, surely, through all your unknown future. Be honest and sincere only to know and to walk in the Lord's way, the way in which *He* would have you to go; and then will He fulfil His most gracious promise, "*Lo, I am with you alway.*"

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Christ must be our guide in the midst of the utmost peril and dangers. Many a soldier on the battle field is consoled with the belief that Christ is his guide though leading him to death, and through death to glory.

The following notes were written in pencil by Samuel F. Willard, of Madison, Conn., captain in the fourteenth Connecticut regiment. They were addressed to his wife, and within an hour after the last record,

which was found on his person, was made, he had fallen on the battle field. On Sunday morning, September 14th, he wrote: "To-day we started on our long march on hard bread and coffee alone; marched till four o'clock. We are now in line of battle in the Middletown Valley—right in sight there is an artillery engagement—nothing very serious."

MIDDLETOWN VALLEY, Sept. 15, 1862.
MONDAY MORNING.

These may be my last words; if so, they are these:

I have full faith in Jesus Christ my Saviour; I do not regret that I have fallen in defence of my country; I have loved you truly and know that you have loved me, and in leaving this world of sin I go to another and better one, where I am confident I shall meet you. I freely forgive all my

enemies, and ask them for Christ's sake to forgive me. If my body should ever reach home, let there be no ceremony; I ask no higher honor than to die for my country; lay me silently in the grave, imitate my virtues, and forgive all my errors.

I prefer death in the cause of my country, to life in sympathy with its enemies.

And now, my precious wife, good-bye. May the grace of God sustain you, and we will meet at last in heaven.

Signed in the valley on the battle ground near Boliver Heights, Md.

SAMUEL FRANCIS WILLARD.

TUESDAY MORNING, Sept. 16, 1862.

The Division moved yesterday at about 10 A. M., passed through the region of the battle on the previous day — dead rebels on every side. Our surgeons administered to the wants of many of the wounded rebels.

Saw hundreds of wounded rebels as we passed through different villages, in barns, houses, hospitals. It was a very sorry sight for our boys—rebels were strongly intrenched on the mountain and held a good position, but fled as the army approached. Generals Mc Clellan and Burnside passed in front of the army—immense cheering. Rebel prisoners being brought in all the time, poorly dressed but fine looking fellows—act as though they were glad to be taken in.

TUESDAY MORNING,—later

The battle has commenced, one man killed within twenty rods of me by a shell. My faith is in God; if I die, I die in the faith of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who died that I might live. We are now to go into battle. God save my men, God save me, God save the United States of America, God bless you my own dear wife, and may

we meet at last in heaven where there will be no war or sin.

CAMP NEAR PETERSVILLE, Md.,
Wednesday Morning, 17th.

We are on the eve of a great battle. Yesterday, there was an artillery engagement close by us, and we were dodging shells and balls for about three hours. One man was killed within fifteen or twenty rods of me. Several others were wounded. We have an immense army here; McClellan and Burnside are in command; I cannot say more; we are ordered off with eighty rounds of cartridges; cannon are booming on every side; my faith is in God.

I passed the battle ground Monday, saw the dead and dying on every side; I pray God we may be successful and that you may see me again.———

And just there the pencil notes close

suddenly. An hour later he lay dead on the field of victory, and this pencil story remains to tell how he died.

CHAPTER IV.

CHRIST A SHIELD.

AS a *Shield* and *Deliverer*, Christ is ever with His people. Our estimation of this truth will be proportioned to our intelligent apprehension of the number and potency of our enemies—the costliness and preciousness of the treasure thus divinely protected. With what unslumbering vigilance, with what divine power, with what changeless love does the Lord Jesus shield the work of grace in the soul of His people! Who keeps that spark alive in the ocean? Who guards this vineyard of red wine night and day lest any hurt it? Who preserves faith from faltering, love

from chilling, hope from dying? Who strengthens the work when it is feeble, raises it when it droops, restores it when it relapses, keeps it in the cold of winter and the drought of summer, and, when the frosts and winds of autumn would nip and scatter its foliage, clothes it with the freshness and bloom of spring? Oh, it is Jesus, encircling with His all-protecting shield the work which His death accomplished and which His Spirit wrought. Trembling believer in Christ! cast not away this holy confidence, for it hath great recompence of reward. The work of grace in your heart shall never die; the kingdom of righteousness, peace, and joy in your soul is indestructible. "*They shall never perish*," is the declaration of the Shepherd who bought you with His blood. Watched over by Christ, you are kept by the power of God. And, although the tide of spiritual affection may ebb, and the

shadows of twilight fall thickly upon your soul, and you be ready to regard your conversion a mistake, your religion a delusion, and your hope a fallacy — thus casting away your confidence, yet, there is One who knows His own work, recognizes His own image, reads His Spirit's writing in the soul, and must Himself cease to be ere He allows those living embers of love He has enkindled upon the altar of your renewed heart to die. The rain may descend, the winds may blow, the flood may surge—

> "But the inextinguishable flame burns on,
> And shall for ever burn."

And then there are external assualts from which alone Christ can shield us. Innumerable and invisible, sleepless and restless, working with a power almost almighty, and every where with an ubiquity almost omnipresent, ever plotting our ruin, are the

spiritual enemies of our soul, and the sworn foes of our faith. The world, and its fascinations; Satan, and his devices; the flesh, and its tendencies; error, and its disguises, are all confederate against the child of God, opposing his every advance in holiness. But Christ is our ever-present shield, near at the moment of assault, and skillful to parry and disarm it. "*Fear not, Abram, I am thy shield*," are words addressed to all who have like precious faith with him. Listen to Paul when defending Christianity before Nero: "*At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me. . . Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me.*" Severed from the protection and sympathy of man, he was all the more conscious of the presence and love of God. This is the manner of the Lord with us. The stage shall be swept of the human to give place to the Divine. When the last

human prop bends, and the last spark of creature-hope expires, hail it as the harbinger of Christ's nearness, that the more signal may appear His loving deliverance, and the more complete and undivided His glory. Oh yes! the Lord encompasses you. Encircled by danger, you are also encircled by Christ. When you embark in His cause on foreign service, enter the carriage of a railway, launch upon the treacherous sea, bend your steps of mercy to the bedside of infection, travel the lone and dreary road, be your experience what it may, let your mind be kept in perfect peace, trusting in this truth: the ever-present protection of Jesus. The unhealthy clime shall be harmless, the sickening malaria innocuous, the perilous transit safe, curtained within the pavilion of your Saviour's love. Swelling above the tempest, louder than the voice of many waters, or whispered in the still

solitude, softer than the Æolian's breathing, shall be heard the words of Jesus, "*Fear not, I am with thee; be not dismayed, I am thy God.*" Lord, it is enough! My heart trusted in Thee, and I am helped!

Christ is with His people as the *Head and Depository of all their spiritual supplies.* The resources of the believer, although not from himself, and often, like Hagar's well, veiled from the eye, are yet, like that well-spring of water, flowing at the very side of the needy saint. Destitution may reign far and wide, and the plaintive cry ascend from many a famished lip, "Who will show us any good?"—yet his soul, fed with the hidden manna and quenched from the river, the streams of which make glad the city of God, is kept alive in famine and in drought, and is like "*a watered garden, and like a spring of water whose waters fail not.*" And what explains this mystery? The nearness

at his side of a full Christ, overflowing with a redundancy of grace, love, and sympathy, suiting every circumstance, answering every call, supplying every demand. New exigencies may occur in his daily history, new demands made upon his mental and physical powers, trials of a new form may transpire, infirmities but just discovered, sorrows hitherto untasted, temptations before unknown, all marking a new epoch in his history, a new phase of Christian experience, and all clamorous for the grace that is to sustain, the sympathy that is to soothe, the wisdom that is to guide. And shall they ask in vain? Never! Christ is with us, furnished, given, and pledged to supply amply and fully all the necessities of His people. "*And of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace*," that is, grace following grace, grace answering every call for grace, more grace, grace outmeasuring

all past supply, all present want, "*exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think.*" O blessed truth! in the world's insolvency, the believer has a safe bank; in the world's famine, he has a full granary; in the world's drought, he has springs of water; in the world's heat, he has his pleasant and grateful shade. And all this is concentrated in Christ; for Christ is all. O favored saint! to have a full, overflowing, redundant supply, so near; exiled from all other resources, other supports failing, other springs drying, other shades vanishing as in a night, and he, perchance, sitting him down to die in hopeless grief, lo! words fall upon his ear softer, sweeter than angels' chimes, "*I am with you alway;* with you in this lone place and at this trying moment, to unseal your eye to the boundless fulness that it pleased the Father should dwell in Me for you, the Father's child."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

"Hold thou me up and I shall be safe." In a certain regiment fifty-seven men were men of prayer. Before a great battle they all fell on their knees and asked Christ to take care of them. All survived while hundreds of the regiment were killed.

WHAT SET HIM TO THINKING.

"Glad to see you. I shall never forget the medicine you gave me below Frederick."

This was said by my ambulance driver, a young man who had been directed by the surgeon to go with me on a tour of distribution. I did not recollect him for the moment. He seemed happy as we started off, and inclined to converse. "I did n't think much of religion," said he, "before I came to this war, but I've had a great many

serious thoughts here. I mean to lead a different life."

"What set you a thinking?"

"Ball's Bluff was one place."

"Were you there?"

"Yes, all day fighting. I tell you it was solemn work; my comrades falling dead on either side of me. I felt that I wanted religion."

"That set you a thinking?"

"Yes, it did; and another thing was a young man by the name of W——, a brave fellow and a Christian, when on the morning of the battle he knelt down in front of our tent and prayed."

"Tell me about that," said I.

"We had been detailed from our regiment as orderlies of General Lander, and occupied a tent together. We were not obliged to go to the battle, but hearing that our company were going, we could not stay away, and

both obtained permission to fall in. Off we hurried. W—— ran back for his cartridge box, and then, as if he had forgotten something else, dropped upon his knees at the door of the tent, and began to pray most earnestly. I never heard such a prayer as that. I took my hat off, but did not kneel. The captain of his company (not a Christian) stood by and shook his head at the boys to have them keep still, saying, in a low tone, as he pointed to the one praying, 'That's a good boy;' and General Lander, when he heard of that prayer, remarked: '*That is the kind of soldiers I want. That boy is worth his weight in Gold.*' We went to the fight, and neither of us was hurt. God helped us through."

MUSIC AND LIGHT ON THE BATTLE FIELD.

A brave and godly captain in one of our western regiments told one of us his story,

as we were removing him to the hospital. He was shot through both thighs with a rifle bullet: a wound from which he could not recover. While lying on the field, he suffered intense agony from thirst. He supported his head upon his hand, and the rain from heaven was falling around him. In a little while a little pool of water formed under his elbow, and he thought if he could only get to that puddle he might quench his thirst. He tried to get into a position to suck up a mouthful of muddy water, but he was unable to reach within a foot of it. Said he, "I never felt so much the loss of any earthly blessing. By-and-by night fell, and the stars shone out clear and beautiful above the dark field; and I began to think of the great God who had given his Son to die a death of agony for me, and that He was up there—up above the scene of suffering, and above those glorious stars; and I felt

that I was going home to meet Him, and praise Him there; and I felt that I ought to praise God, even wounded and on the battle field. I could not help singing that beautiful hymn,

'When I can read my title clear
To mansions in the skies,
I'll bid farewell to every fear,
And wipe my weeping eyes.'

And," said he, "there was a Christian brother in the brush near me. I could not see him, but I could hear him. He took up the strain; and beyond him another and another caught it up all over the terrible battle field of Shiloh. That night the echo was resounding, and we made the field of battle ring with hymns of praise to God!"

CHAPTER V.

CHRIST A TEACHER.

CHRIST is with His people as—*a Teacher*. There exists no office of Christ that is not openly impugned and denied in the present day: and not one more so than His *prophetic* office. The instruction that causeth to err, everywhere and alarmingly abounds. The teaching of men is exalted above the teaching of Christ, and, as a consequence, Infidelity and Popery are rife, and the people are wondering after the false prophet and the beast. This is a day in which the Lord's true people must exhibit their loyalty to Christ in his prophetical office: as the sole, divine, author-

ized Teacher of the Church. To Him, as our Teacher, must we only look, and His teaching must we only follow. There is no safety but at Christ's feet; accepting no doctrine and observing no practice but what comports with the teaching, example, and simplicity of his word. If true and faithful disciples, *to Christ* we must closely and exclusively adhere. We have but one master, Christ; to Him we stand or fall. Beware, in religious sentiments, of the fascination and influence of ecclesiastical authority, cultivated intellect, and polished bearing: all this is of man, and partakes of the infirmity and sinfulness of man. Untaught by the Holy Spirit, and unsanctified by God's grace, we have seen the most brilliant and eminent gifts prove but as decoy lights, glimmering along the bleak, fatal shores of Infidelity and Romanism, alluring, and then wrecking, upon their rocks, quicksands, and shoals the

too confiding, unsuspecting mind, "*handling the word of God deceitfully.*" Oh, be Christ's true disciple: loyal to His person and faithful to His truth! It is the word of Christ that quickens you, sanctifies you, comforts you. Nor can you part with one doctrine of Christ without inflicting the most serious injury upon your soul, and shading His glory. "*Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom.*" The more experimentally you know, and the more simply you walk in Christ's truth, the holier and the happier will you be. Oh, how increasingly glorious to your eye and precious to your heart will Christ become! You will more and more clearly see that all truth centers in Christ, and that Christ is the substance of all truth; that to know Christ is to know the truth; and to know the truth is to be freed from the blinding influence, erroneous teaching, and ghostly authority

of man. Blessed Jesus! thou Divine Prophet of Thy Church! "happy are Thy men, happy are these Thy servants, which stand continually before Thee, and that hear Thy wisdom."

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Christ must be made of God, to us wisdom in the midst of ignorance. He must be our Teacher, for He can teach without any man at all. The following are cases of this divine illumination:

AN ANXIOUS ROMAN CATHOLIC.

It was a young man. His eyes were red with weeping. He had attended these meetings for a few days. He came at first without the knowledge of his friends. He became anxious about his soul, almost from

the first time of his coming to the prayer meetings. His friends found out his state of mind—that the poor young man was anxious to know what he should do to be saved—and they hurried him out, at night, into the streets.

"Last night." said he, "I had to walk the streets all night, to keep myself warm;" and he looked down at his worn-out shoes.

The Saviour, we told him, "had not where to lay His head." His eyes filled with tears. We conversed with him, counseled him, prayed with him, and he went out to seek employment, saying, "I shall be in the prayer meeting to-morrow."

ANOTHER.

He came wishing to know where he could go to sign the temperance pledge. He had a family. He had formed drinking habits, though not a drunkard; but his

conviction was, that, to be consistent in seeking an interest in Christ, he ought to begin by abandoning strong drink. He is earnestly seeking. He is at our meetings every day, and begins to give pleasing evidence that he has experienced the "great change."

ANOTHER.

This is the case of a lady. She put into the meeting the following request for prayer:

"A lady (Roman Catholic) who came to this meeting at first out of mere curiosity, but who heard at this meeting such things as she has never heard before, would be *very thankful* if the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting will pray for her all this week, that she may be taught how to believe on Christ. She does not think she is a Christian, but desires to be one. She will attend every day."

She was inquired of if her priest would

allow her to attend these prayer meetings.

"My priest," she replied, "cannot hinder me. The step is my own. It is taken with great deliberation. I act under the dictates of my own conscience. I must do what I am convinced my own welfare requires. I believe these are Christians. I believe this is prayer."

"What has wrought such a great change in your feelings and opinions?"

"The wide difference between the members of my own Church and those who come here to pray, is enough to induce me to inquire what it means. These are praying people. My people are cursing, swearing, prayerless people. I believe these are Christians. I fear that very few of my Church are Christians; I think some are."

"Are you concerned about yourself?"

"So much so that I am very miserable.

I did not close my eyes in sleep last night, by reason of my anxiety."

"Can you give up all hope from your own merits, or any meritorious acts which you may perform—all expectation of pardon on account of penances or absolution, and rest solely on the merits of Christ's atoning sacrifice for all your hope of justification with God?"

"I can, and do so. I know I must. But I do not have peace."

"Is there any thing you are unwilling to give up?"

"No, nothing. I am willing to give up Church, my former religion, every thing else, if I can only have forgiveness of sin, and peace and joy in believing in Christ, such as you Protestants have."

"You must not make a merit of even giving these up. You must simply trust your soul in the hands of Christ, as a Saviour, with confidence and love."

Can any doubt that this poor Catholic lady has been led of the Spirit, thus far? She does not doubt it. She says none but Divine power could have led her to the ground on which she now stands.

CHAPTER VI.

CHRIST A SAVIOUR.

CHRIST is with us as—*a Saviour.* Oh, how the heart thrills and the eye beams at the mention of the name of JESUS! What we chiefly need is, not wisdom to guide, or power to shield, or sympathy to soothe, or might to strengthen; it is SALVATION—the soul saved—a Saviour to save us to the uttermost. We want guilt atoning blood, soul-justifying righteousness, sin-subduing grace; a Saviour that has done all, suffered all, paid all, and leaves us nothing to do but, believe and be saved. This is Jesus. My reader, salvation is the finished work of Christ, and the free gift of

God; and nothing less and nothing more is required of you than that, with a penitent and believing heart, you trust in the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus. God has laid all your sins, all your curse, and all your condemnation upon Christ; and all that He asks of you in return is, a believing, loving, obedient reception of His Son. Oh, then, grieve not, dishonor not the Saviour by doubting His willingness or ability to save *you!*

Let us employ the few remaining pages in suggesting some of those more peculiar and pressing *circumstances* in our history in which the presence of Christ may be especially anticipated by the child of God, the believing apprehension of which will impart nerve to the hand that grasps this strong and beautiful staff.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Christ is the all-sufficient and only Saviour and Redeemer for all those who will truly put their trust in Him. He saves to the uttermost all who come to God by Him.

COMING TO CHRIST AT ONCE.

"Are you the Missionary of this old Church?" said a plain, intelligent, energetic looking man, as he came up into the upper lecture room in Fulton Street.

"I am," said the Missionary.

"Well, I wanted to see you and talk with you a moment."

"What do you want?" said the Missionary. The man stood with his chin quivering, and his eyes suffused with tears, as he answered; "I want to become a Christian."

"You do?" said the Missionary. "Why do you want to become a Christian?"

"I am a farmer," said the man, "well to do in the world. I have every thing in the world that a man needs, but I have no religion." And he looked like a despairing, lost man, who knew he was lost.

"What roused up your attention to the need of religion?"

"I read in the revival article, in the Christian Intelligencer, a scrap headed, 'not till the next communion.' It told how the poor man kept saying, when urged to come to the Church and make open profession of his attachment to Christ, 'Not till the next communion:' till one day when he was called for, at his room, it was found that he was gone. And when inquiry was made for him, the unfeeling answer was made that he died right here, dropped down dead, one day, and we cleared him out to Greenwood. I read it, and it struck terror to my mind. I thought, what if I should be stricken down

in the same way, all unprepared as I am."

"And what would become of you?"

"I should be lost," said he, with deep feeling, "lost. I know I should go right down to hell, for I am a great sinner."

"How was it that you came in here?"

"I am a farmer in Hunterdon County, New Jersey; I had heard of these prayer meetings here, so I thought I would come here at once. I was in the meeting yesterday. And I must go home to-day; and I cannot go till I am a Christian."

The Missionary closed the door and thus precluded interruption, and said, "I do not see but you must become a Christian *now.* Are you willing to submit to Christ now, to believe on Him, and trust Him and His finished righteousness for all your hope of salvation?"

"Yes."

"To repent of, and forsake all sin, and devote yourself forever to Him?"

"Yes."

"To pray with me now, to go home and pray in your family, and under all circumstances lead a Christian life?"

"Yes."

The Missionary led in prayer. The farmer followed, in a prayer of earnest humility, penitence, self-renunciation, and unreserved consecration to the service of God.

He went into the prayer meeting which was just about to open. After it was over, he went on his way, rejoicing in the hope that his sins had been forgiven, and resolved on a new life of devotedness to God. From the time of his first awakening, he gave his attention to the subject of personal religion with an earnestness which asked for no delay. "Such a prayer as that man made," said the Missionary, in relating these facts,

"I scarcely ever heard; and I felt in my own soul, that that man had found an interest in Christ, and had made the surrender and the consecration which he professed."

Some one touched the writer as he was leaving the prayer meeting. He turned and saw the face of a well-known Christian brother; and close at hand stood a young lady, dressed in deep mourning, with whom he had been conversing—standing there, a child of sorrow. The big tears were slowly rolling down her cheek, and then she would wipe them away, as if she had been half unconscious of their falling.

Here is a lady, said the gentleman, to whom I wish you to say a few words. She says she is "uncertain what to do." I soon saw that she was in spiritual trouble.

"Why are you uncertain what to do?" we enquired.

"I do not understand the next step to be taken," said she.

"Where are you now?" we asked.

"I have been coming daily to these meetings for four weeks, and all that time I have felt anxious about my soul, but all I do does not seem to make my case any better."

"And what do you try to do?"

"I have striven to convince myself that I am a sinner: as I know I am. But though I know it, as a truth, I do not feel about it as I should."

"How would you feel about it if you could?"

"I would have deep conviction."

"What is your present impression about yourself?"

"That I am a great sinner; that is all."

"And what would you have more?"

"That is what I do not understand. My

next step should be for deeper conviction. But what further can I do?"

"Your mistake is a very common one. Your next step, and only step, is to go to Christ, just as you are. Go to Him at once. You can do nothing. Hitherto you have been relying upon yourself. Renounce all this as a dishonor done to Christ, as a Saviour, and go to Him for all the help you need hope for, or desire."

"Is that all?"

"That is all. You must repent now and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. Go to Him, who says to you, 'Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out.' All you have to do is, with true penitence, to believe in His mercy."

"Oh," said she, as if a new light had dawned upon her mind, "is *that* my next step?"

"Not your *next* step, as if you had al-

ready taken one or more right steps in religion. Going to Christ is your first step. He does not say, Come to conviction, come to a deeper sense of sin. But He says, Come unto *Me*."

"Oh! what a self-righteous creature I am. I see it all now. I have been refusing Christ, while all this time I thought I was preparing to come to Him." She said this, evidently disappointed in herself.

"Will you go to Jesus, now?" was hastily asked.

She looked up with a smile, and great resolution depicted in her intelligent face, as she answered,

"I WILL."

She *will*, indeed, if the Spirit was truly making her "willing in the day of His power." There and then we parted. The sequel is yet to come.

CHAPTER VII.

CHRIST IN SERVICE.

CHRIST is with you—*in service.* The religion of Jesus is an active, self-denying religion. The Divine Master has left the scene of His own toil, but He has given to every disciple his work. Each has his mission: something to do for souls, something to accomplish for the Saviour, some glory to bring to God. Realizing in some degree what a debtor to the Lord he is, what he owes to the love that chose him, to the blood that ransomed him, to the grace that called him, to the Saviour that gave Himself a sacrifice, the believer exclaims from the depth of his grateful

heart, "*Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?*" And now, to labor for Christ is his highest desire and ambition; be the service home or foreign, pleasant or self-denying, distinguished or obscure, to rule an empire or to sweep a crossing. In this service for Christ, Christ is with you. Unseen and unheard, He is close at your side, guiding your judgment, strengthening your faith, nerving your heart, sustaining and cheering your spirit, honoring, blessing, and rewarding your labor. Oh, think not that Christ can quit you for a moment, active and toiling for Him. He knows all your difficulties, marks your discouragements, is cognizant of your infirmities, sees your faintings and deficiencies, how onerous, delicate and humbling the task. Think you, while engaged in a service of love for His name, the sweat upon your brow, the pressure of your mind, anxiety and exhaustion absorbing life itself,

foes threatening, friends chiding, your own heart often misgiving, that Christ will leave you? Oh never! "*Lo, I am with you alway*"—*all days*—are the words with which He seeks to strengthen and cheer you on in your work of faith and labor of love which you show for His dear name.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Christ must ever be with us in all the duties of life. We must have His presence as a power in our hearts. "Ever with you" has cheered thousands of hearts in the midst of arduous labors in His service.

ONE OF GENERAL HAVELOCK'S MEN.

As soon as the prayer was concluded, an old British veteran arose, and began to speak

with a strong Scotch accent. He said he was glad to hear that young chaplain to the army ask for prayer. For his part he believed in prayer; he rejoiced in prayer; he lived in prayer. He had known the power of prayer. He had felt it. He knew God heard and answered prayer. Oh! how wondrously does He answer! What displays of His grace, said he, have I seen in answer to prayer. When General Havelock was chaplain of a company, I was a non-commissioned officer in the same company. I knew him well. He was not then a pious man. He began even then, however to manifest those qualities which afterwards so distinguished him. It was not until he rose to a higher grade that the great change took place. Then, he was for the salvation of his men, out of every kind of evil: present and to come. At first he began with temperance. Then he went on to religion. He was a

noble commander, brave as he was good. He dared to do right, no matter who opposed. When his chaplains were gone, or disabled, he would be his own chaplain. He had heard him preach the Gospel many a time. He was a power in the camp: that you may well believe. The men all respected him. They knew he was a thorough soldier: fearless as a lion, as well as a Christian. Many eyes would be wet when Havelock was speaking. There was such earnestness and tenderness at times. At other times he would make your very hair stand on end. It was not strange that many were converted. Their hearts melted under his appeals and great numbers turned to the Lord. When they received Jesus, and great numbers did, and professed their faith in Christ, then he went one step further, and baptized them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Oh!

what solemn times I have seen away in India among these men.

Some of the officers became his enemies. They wrote to the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in India, complaining of General Havelock, and saying that he did things unbecoming an officer, and took upon himself to do what he had no right to do. The Chief in command appointed a Commission of Inquiry. They came and made a thorough examination into the conduct of the General and the condition of the men. They found Havelock a most rigid disciplinarian — thorough in discipline as he was fervent in prayer, and they found no portion of the army in so good a state as the soldiers of Havelock. They said to him, after all their examination, "Go on with your temperance; go on with your praying; go on with your baptizing; the better these Christian men, the better the soldiers." They

reported to the Chief in command that they found no such soldiers as the praying saints, as they called them, of General Havelock. If there were men wanted for any post of duty and of danger, Havelock's saints were the men.

I have been in many a hard-fought battle, the old soldier added, and our men never went into battle without prayer. They committed themselves to the Lord Jesus, and then they were ready for life or death.

Our armies, said the old veteran, should be praying armies. We *must* have prayer. Prayer prevails with God. How was it with Joshua and the kings and prophets of Israel? What men of prayer they were, and how the Lord heard and answered them. Let us pray for the men in arms; pray for the chaplains.

The old warrior spoke with great earnest-

ness, and the tears rolled down many a face as he gave his personal experience and hearty, honest testimony to the *power of prayer*.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHRIST IN SUFFERING.

CHRIST is with you in—*suffering.* Himself a sufferer; oh, suffering never looked so lovely, martyrdom never wore a crown so resplendent, as when the Son of God bowed His head and drank the cup of woe for us! Himself a sufferer, is there a being in the universe who could take His place at your side in all the scenes of mental, spiritual, and bodily suffering through which your Heavenly Father leads you, comparable to Christ? What are your sufferings contrasted with His? And what was there in the unparalleled greatness and intensity of His to dis-

qualify Him from entering with the warmest love and deepest sympathy into yours? Suffering for His sake, or suffering His will, He is with you to sustain, to mitigate, to sanctify. It is given to you not only to believe, but also to suffer for Christ. Removed from the active sphere of your Christianity; the sphere and the service which, perhaps, you too fondly idolized; He has placed you in the school of passive endurance, a position to you the most irksome and trying. Look into the burning, fiery furnace of the three children of Israel: "*Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God*," (Dan. 3: 25). So is Christ with you in suffering. You shall pass through the furnace, the flames but destroying your bonds and setting you free from some dominant sin, some potent spell, some slavish fear, bringing you more fully into

the happy, holy realization of your adoption, pardon, and acceptance of God. Treading that furnace at your side, controlling its flames, tempering its heat, is the same Son of God who trod it with them, and who says to you, "*Lo, I am with you alway*"

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The blessed Saviour is never more with His people than in suffering. He himself has been a sufferer and He knows how to pity His people when they suffer, and if best for them, He can send them quick relief.

An old sea captain, with great emphasis, exhorted men to have faith in God, as a hearer and answerer of prayer. He urged faith as certain of a blessing in some form or other, and often in the very form in which it was looked for. He mentioned an illus-

tration in his own history. After he became pious, and while he yet commanded a ship, he was blown off from the coast of America, out to sea, in a gale. He had his wife and two children on board. All hands, passengers, officers and crew, were put on short allowance, and very short at that, a mere morsel of meat to each. When they had been out thirty days, and had not seen a sail, he brought up all the provision he had, and spread it on a cotton bale, and fell down on his knees by the side of it, and prayed God that He would make that like the widow's cruise of oil and barrel of meal, that He would not allow it to be spent, that He would vindicate His own name as the hearer of prayer, and send them quick relief. He cast himself implicitly upon the promise of God. And while he was yet on his knees, he felt such a sweet assurance that his prayer was heard and already answered,

that he went down into the cabin and told his wife that they should have succor, and that speedily. She could scarcely believe it. They had been now thirty-four days, and had not seen a sail, and no prospect of seeing one. His wife stood in a state of incredulous amazement.

"What makes you think we are to have succor?" said she.

"Because I have been asking, and God has assured me that it is coming, and close at hand."

While I was yet speaking, there was a cry on deck, and from the lookout, aloft, "Sail ho," "Sail ho." I ran on deck; "Where away?" said I, and was answered; and within ten minutes from the time I arose from my knees in prayer, there was a ship under full sail, bearing down for us, and when it came near, I saw them lower the boat, and put into it four barrels. The boat

was cast off and pulled away for my ship. You would hardly have expected that such a little cockle shell of a boat could live in such a sea. But she rode like an egg. When the officer came on deck, I enquired of him what he had in his boat.

"Two barrels of meat, and two barrels of bread," he answered.

"What made you bring them here?" said I.

"God put it into my heart. I thought you must be short of provisions, sir, and so I brought them along."

So within an hour from the time I was praying for food, I had two barrels of meat and two barrels of bread added to my stores, and we were all saved.

He said that he could give many like examples from his own history, but the five minutes rule would forbid.

CHAPTER IX.

CHRIST IN RETIREMENT.

CHRIST is with you in—*retirement and solitude.* It was in this path of loneliness, consecrated to contemplation and prayer, that our blessed Lord was the most effectually trained and girded for His mission of love. He frequently and habitually sought retirement. Sequestered from the world, withdrawn from His disciples, He would thread the mountain defiles and seek in its deep ravines and hidden recesses the solitary place for prayer. Entering that lonely garden "*over the brook Kedron*," amidst its hallowed shades, its leafy grottoes, and its solemn stillness, He

spent the night preceding His crucifixion in agonizing prayer, imploring strength from His Father for the morrow. How simple and concise, yet how pregnant with meaning, the narrative of Christ's habits of solitude; "*And in the morning, rising up a great while before day, He went out and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed.*" How holy and instructive, and how melting the pathos of, this spectacle! Child of solitude! whose social position, or whose mental idiosyncrasy, or whose refined and sensitive nature, or whose bodily infirmities separate you from your fellows, cloister you from the world, oh, deem not your path untrodden by your Lord! He walked it before you, and He will delight to come, and by the soothing of His love, and the succourings of His grace, and the manifestations of His glory re-tread again those foot prints He has left upon your shaded way, cheering

and comforting you with His presence. Oh, you cannot be alone: *alone with Christ!* Blessed loneliness, hallowed solitude, shared and sweetened and sanctified by Jesus! Around that sleepless pillow, by that couch of pain, in that room of stillness Christ's presence hovers. Holy the lessons He will now teach you, sweet the truths He will now unfold to you, soothing the words He will now speak to you, unutterable the blessings, into the experience of which He will now bring your soul. It has pleased Him, perhaps, to deny you home and friends and means, thus severing and separating you from all but Himself. Be it so, He still is yours. In separation and solitude He will unfold to you the secret of His covenant, the secret of His love. And now your soul, unclasping her pinions, rises nearer to heaven, nearer to God. Disengaged from the world, severed from the creature, cut off from re-

sources, Christ will have more of your heart, and you will have more of His, than ever. Solitude shared with His presence and sunned with His smile, supplies more immediately traced to His hand, will increase your knowledge of God, strengthen your drooping faith, deepen your personal holiness, give development, symmetry, and perfection to your entire Christian character; and, when you emerge from it, thus trained and disciplined, you will go forth to active duty, "*as a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoicing as a strong man to run a race.*"

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Many a soldier has gone back to his fond mother's instructions in his last moments. The last words have often been the prayers which a mother taught him.

THE SOLDIER'S PRAYER.

It was the evening after a great battle. All day long the din of strife had echoed far, and thickly strewn lay the shattered forms of those so lately erect and exultant in the flesh and strength of manhood. Among the many who bowed to the conqueror Death that night, was a youth in the first freshness of mature life. The strong limbs lay listless, and the dark hair was matted with gore on the pale broad forehead. His eyes were closed. As one who ministered to the sufferer bent over him, he at first thought him dead; but the white lips moved, and slowly in weak tones he repeated,

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take;
And this I ask for Jesus' sake."

As he finished he opened his eyes, and meeting the pitying gaze of a brother soldier, he exclained, "My mother taught me that when I was a little boy, and I have said it every night since I can remember. Before the morning dawn I believe God will take my soul for 'Jesus' sake;' but before I die, I want to send a message to my mother."

He was carried to a temporary hospital, and a letter was written to his mother, which he dictated, full of Christian faith and filial love. He was calm and peaceful. Just as the sun arose, his spirit went home, his last articulate words being,

"I pray the Lord my soul to take;
And this I ask for Jesus' sake."

So died William B—— of the Massachusetts volunteers. The prayer of childhood was the prayer of manhood. He learned it at his mother's knee in his far distant

northern home, and he whispered it in dying, when his young life ebbed away on a southern battle field. It was his nightly petition in life, and the angel who bore his spirit home to heaven, bore the sweet prayer his soul loved so well.

God bless the saintly words, alike loved and repeated by high and low, rich and poor, wise and ignorant, old and young, only second to our Lord's prayer in beauty and simplicity. Happy the soul that can repeat it with the holy fervor of our dying soldier.

CHAPTER X.

CHRIST IN BEREAVEMENT.

CHRIST is with you—*in the hour of bereavement.* He, too, drank of this cup. He offers you not a heart unacquainted with your grief. He had much to do with death when on earth. He sympathized with its sorrow, awoke its slumbers, robbed it of its prey, became its Victim, and then its Victor. He has permitted this bereavement to visit you. Not without His will and His purpose of love, has He smitten you with this woe, visited you with this loss. Has your Heavenly Father written you a widow, an orphan, childless, friendless? Has He removed the

joy of your heart, the light of your home, the hope of your family, the strong and beautiful staff upon which you leaned for support? Is your door darkened with the funeral that bears from its threshold all that was so fondly loved and precious? Oh, deem not yourself forsaken, desolate, and bereft! Christ was never nearer to you than now. The Christ who bedewed the turf of Lazarus' grave with tears of bereaved affection for the dead, and of sacred sympathy with the living, is spiritually at this moment by your side. He offers you a heart touched with your grief, throbbing with a love that more than compensates for the affection now cold in death; an arm that shall be equal in its strength and support to your emergency; a shield that will encircle your person, your position, and your interests, infinitely more potent and safe than that which at one fell stroke God has laid low. Christ sensibly,

manifestly with you now, oh wish not to displace Him by recalling the treasure from which you have parted. It is recorded of the amiable and pious Fénelon, that in the eulogy he pronounced over the Dauphin, his illustrious pupil and friend, as the corpse shrouded with the pall was placed in the church before the pulpit, where,

"Lovely in death, the beauteous ruin lay!"

he uttered these words: "There lies the hope of his father! the delight of his court! the object of the nation's joyful anticipation! But so convinced am I of his happy state, that, if the turning of a straw would bring him back, I would not turn that straw." Weeping mourner! bereaved Christian! in the bright sunshine of hope which bathes the coffined remains of "one so dear," read you this holy lesson of cheerful acquiescence with the will of your Father, and express

your perfect satisfaction in the eternal happiness of the departed one now sweetly sleeping in Jesus. If the turning of a straw would recall him from the realms of glory, would you be willing to turn that straw? This new, deeper, and darker sorrow shall bring Jesus with it. Its anguish will be solaced by His love, its loneliness will be shared by His presence, its gloom will be brightened with His smile, its calamity will be sanctified by His grace, and all its newborn exigencies will be met by His boundless resources of wisdom, power, and love. "*Lo, I am with you alway.*"

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Christ is specially with His people in bereavement. In the sad hour when the heart is full of desolation, His voice is heard

saying, "Let not your heart be troubled." We may be despoiled of the heart's richest treasures, and yet Jesus may fill it with His richest consolations.

"MOTHER, I WANT TO SAY MY PRAYERS."

A pious man, and a physician, said: "You will all remember that I was in this meeting a few days ago, and told you of my losing a little boy eight years old. Since I was last here, we have lost another still younger. The oldest was a child remarkable for his intelligence in the things of religion. He seemed to have a full comprehension of the way of salvation, through repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He had long expressed the hope that he might be a minister and a missionary of the Lord Jesus. To this work a father's and a mother's heart had consecrated our bright little boy, if it should please the Lord

to spare him. But it was not so to be. In a most unexpected moment that child took his leave of us, rejoicing in the going, and soared away to be forever with Christ. For we could not doubt that the dear boy was a real Christian, made so by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.

"The last child sickened with the same disease. His case was very painful, for he suffered intensely. It was evident very soon that death had marked him for his prey. We have always taught our children to pray, even before they could speak their words plainly. We have not been among those who believe that children can be saved otherwise than by the washing away of all corruption and moral defilement in the blood of Christ. So we could teach them to pray in all sincerity, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' We could teach them that they

must never expect to go to heaven by reason of their own innocence; but they must be *saved* by the blood of Christ. They must be *sanctified* by the Holy Spirit. They must be rendered *meet* for the inheritance of the saints in light. So we believed; so we prayed; so we taught our children to pray.

"When this little boy was in his death hour, he looked up, with a most wishful look, a pleading look, as if he feared he might be denied, and said:

"'Mother! I want to say my prayers.' She knew the heart of her little boy, and immediately answered:

"'My dear child, you shall say your prayers.'

"'Not here,' said the little sufferer, 'but on my knees.'

"He was lying on her lap. She raised him on his knees, when he clasped his arms

around her neck, and laying his head upon her shoulder, poured out his heart in prayer to God. He was so week and feeble that he could only say a word at a time. At length his prayers were finished, and he unclasped his little arms and fell back upon her lap. A smile of heavenly sweetness stole over his face, he drew a few inspirations—slow—slower—and he was gone. Oh!" said the pious father; "the blood of Jesus, that cleanseth from all sin, never appeared so precious to me as it did then. I looked upon my dear little boy as one whom I might hope had been *redeemed* and *saved* through the merits of that blood.

"I want to urge all fathers and mothers here, to consecrate their young children to Jesus. Teach them, oh! teach them, to trust in Jesus Christ, to be saved by His blood."

CHAPTER XI.

CHRIST IN SICKNESS.

CHRIST is with you—*in sickness.* There are some trials which in an especial manner bring Christ near to us. There is a secret in all sorrow, there is a deep one in this. To whom can the sufferer confide it? The disease, perhaps, perplexes the judgment or baffles the skill of the physician. The nervous irritability, the cerebral sensitiveness, the extreme weakness, the acute agony which renders the concussion of the gentlest footfall too powerful for the frame, may be but little understood by the most considerate, tender watchers at your side. They, perhaps, but little know

what heroic fortitude, what patient endurance of spirit lie concealed beneath all this uncomplaining suffering, what an incessant conflict is waging, and by what a superhuman struggle the mastery is obtained of the mind over the body, and of God's grace over both. How difficult it is to suppress irritation, and how hard to express gratitude, when even the smile of love and the tear of compassion can awaken no responsive feeling, where all is pain, uneasiness, and despondency! But Christ is with you! You may not always be sensible of it. As the drapery of your bed and the deep shadows of your room may conceal from your view the nearness of a loved friend, so your physical infirmities may absorb all thought and consciousness but that of suffering and languor, depriving you of the *sensible* enjoyment of the Lord's presence. Notwithstanding, He is at your side, watching you

with sleepless love, succouring with His own grace the spiritual depression of your soul, and mitigating with His own power the anguish of your bodily sufferings. Think of the human and tender considerateness of Christ! He knows your frame, and remembers that you are dust, and exacts and expects not from you more than you are capable of experiencing. Blessed sickness! that leads the mind more fully into the conscious presence of Christ, that pillows the restless head upon His changeless love, that realizes the encircling of His arm of power beneath the sinking frame, that attunes the discordant will into sweeter and more perfect harmony with His, that gently moulds the soul to His own meek and patient spirit! Oh, holy lessons, precious truths, costly blessings learnt and experienced on a bed of sickness and of suffering! And were this the only one, the clinging, soothing, sustaining

presence of Christ with the sick one He loves, it were enough.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

We will give one single example which illustrates the presence of Christ in sickness. We might give many drawn from the scenes in hospital. The following is from a lady who has devoted all her energies and her very life in attending on suffering soldiers in Hospital:

I very cheerfully comply with your request to write to the children of the Sabbath school. I would thank them for the books and tracts I have received through their generosity. I take great pleasure in distributing these, since I know how they have been furnished. I think they are doing a good work in two ways: First, I think they may be very

useful here among these soldiers who are much in need of all the good influences that may be brought around them; and beside this, I think they are teaching the children at home to be unselfish, and to care kindly for the wants and interests of others. This alone I consider a great and good work, but I hope this may be the little seed that will grow into a great and beautiful tree, to bud and blossom, and bear fruit for themselves and others, thoughout their whole lives.

I would like to relate some incidents which lately occurred here, showing what Christianity will do for a man.

On the 30th of last August, a great many wounded men were brought into Alexandria: so many that the hospitals were filled, and the wounded were lying crowded on the sidewalks about hospital doors. Among the rest was a Virginian, but a true hearted Union man. He was wounded very badly

in the thigh, and suffered very much, so much so that he moaned and cried out continually. You will think every one felt sorry for him, but not so. All the other wounded men around him had just as much as they could do to bear their own pain, and they had no patience with this man who disturbed them night and day with his cries. They would frequently mock and make fun of him. I would sometimes ask them, for my sake, to forbear; and I would go to him, and try to comfort him, so that he should not feel that every one was against him.

But a better Comforter than I was there; God's Holy Spirit was in his heart, and instead of feeling anger or annoyance at those who mocked him, he only prayed more earnestly that God would enable him to bear his pains with fortitude. This prayer was most surely answered, for he soon became one of the most patient and uncomplaining

men in the whole hospital. A placid, gentle, submissive expression rested on his countenance, that was really most touching to behold. He never manifested the least unkindness towards those who made fun of him, but on the contrary, he was always anxious to share any delicacy he had with them, and would often ask me to send out and buy peaches and grapes for him "to give round to the boys," as he called them. He was often deranged at night, and would sing and pray most of the night; but they all felt so kindly to him now, that this did not disturb them, and they spoke of him as kindly as if he had been a brother. When he knew there was no hope that he could live, I asked him whether he was willing to die, if it was God's will he should not recover. He answered, "Yes," with as pleasant and peaceful a smile as if I had asked him if he wanted to go home; and home I trust he

has gone: to the dear heavenly home of his Father above, where His children shall ever rejoice in His love. After he died, I looked around to see if I could find any thing that I could send home to his sister, of whom he often spoke with great affection. I found a little book at the head of his bed that a kind Christian friend had given him. "Words of Jesus," was the title. I almost cried for joy when I thought how glad that sister would be to get this book, that had been such a treasury of comfort to her poor afflicted brother in his last moments. I enclosed a lock of his hair in a letter, and sent the little book, hoping and praying that these words of Jesus might be very precious words to her, comforting and sustaining her.

"FATHER, IS JESUS THERE?"

A gentleman said he just came from Massachusetts, where he had gone at the

request of a daughter, made when near heaven, that he would take her to her native place for burial. She died, said he, as we call it, a few days ago, in Philadelphia. Just before she died, she asked, "Father, is Jesus in the room?"

"Why do you ask, my daughter? I inquired," said the father.

"Because it seems to me He is here," she replied.

"And you love Him?"

"Yes;" just whispered with a sweet smile beaming on her face; and in five minutes she was gone. I had not a doubt Jesus was in the room, and I delighted myself in staying in that room to which the blessed Saviour had come to take His loving and rejoicing disciple home. It was a place of all on earth most blest,

"Quite on the verge of heaven."

CHAPTER XII.

CHRIST IN TEMPTATION.

CHRIST is witn you in—*temptation.* The hour of temptation in the believer's experience is one in which he may especially and safely rely upon the nearness to him of the Lord. Tried Himself in this crucible, as none ever were, He is prepared by all the appliances of His power, all the restraints of His grace, and all the sympathy of His love, to succor and deliver them that are tempted. Tempted in all points as you are, He knows how to foil the adversary, to quench the dart, and to enable you, the single and the weak one, to put to flight ten thousand foes. Tempted

believer! your faith in the truth of the Bible, your confidence in the God of the Bible, your loyalty to the Saviour of the Bible, your acceptance of the salvation of the Bible, your comfort from the promises of the Bible, your enjoyment of the hope of the Bible, assailed and tampered with by Satan, fear not! Greater is He who is with you than they who are against you. "*The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation.*" Take heart, then, tempted believer! you shall come forth from the fiery furnace, from this painful discipline, of which all the saints of God are partakers, with your faith more firmly grounded, your love more deeply rooted, your heart more thoroughly purified, your hope of glory more unclouded, and that Divine Intercessor for His tempted ones, all the more precious to your heart, who says, "*Satan hath desired to have you that he might sift you as wheat, but*

I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not." O thou Satan-tempted soul, "*Lo, I am with you alway!*"

ILLUSTRATIONS.

Many a man has found his life a failure. He sought but never found what he seeks. All a man can desire may be found in Christ.

One day after the leader had read the thirty-fourth Psalm, in which occurs this promise: "They that seek the Lord shall not want any good thing;" as soon as a proper opportunity occurred, a young man arose and said:

"There was a time when the question of my salvation was just reduced to a matter of dollars and cents. The naked question was whether I could afford to become a Christian. I had been for a long time under

conviction of sin. I knew I must perish if I should die as I then was. I thought I was anxious to be a Christian. I had been an ambitious young man, ambitious to be rich; I had fair prospects of becoming so. I saw at once I must make great sacrifices if I became a Christian. I must give up all my cherished plans and schemes. Giving up all these, I knew not how much more was involved. I saw that I might be poor all my days, instead of being rich, and *how* poor was more than I could tell. The adversary assailed me just in this way.

"You are doing very right to give attention to the subject of religion. It is a very important subject. But you are doing very wrong to make the sacrifice you must to become a Christian; it is unreasonable. You cannot afford it. No one has a right to throw away his blessings. Wealth is a blessing, and you are discussing the question

of being poor all your days, when you have every advantage for becoming rich. Be religious if you will, but by all means be rich; and then with a contented mind you can afford to be religious.

"At the same time the words of Jesus rung in my ears and knocked at my heart: 'He that will not forsake all that he hath cannot be my disciple.' 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.' 'How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven.'

"The devil said, you do not quote the Scriptures correctly. It is hard for them who *trust* in riches to enter into the kingdom of heaven. You can have riches and not *trust* in them. You are not called to make a beggar of yourself all your life long in order to go to heaven. This would be very unreasonable; and you are never required

to do any thing *unreasonable* to get to heaven. Be religious if you will, but by all means be reasonable. Do not make a fool of yourself and in your folly throw your blessings away from you.

"I know that Christ required me to give up all for him. I knew that I could not have my own way in the matter of salvation. There I hung, just on that hinge; balancing the question whether I would be rich and be without salvation, or whether I would be poor and have salvation.

"It was a dreadful struggle, and Satan helped me into trouble all he could and made it seem hard. I thought I was willing to give up all dishonest and wrong ways of getting riches. But why should I be called upon to give up honest ways of seeking and obtaining the good things of this world for the sake of Christ? That was the point of the struggle.

"It was when I was in just that state of perplexity that my eyes fastened upon that tenth verse of the thirty-fourth Psalm: 'They that seek the *Lord* shall not want *any good thing*.' I said to myself, what more do I want than that? What more could be promised? Here is something more and something better than uncertain riches—uncertain about gaining them—uncertain about retaining them after all. But if I seek the Lord I shall not want any good thing.

"I needed just that passage at that time, and God by his Spirit helped me to believe in his faithfulness to fulfil his own word. On that text, as on a hinge, my heart turned to seek the Lord, and I gave up cheerfully all my fancied wealth for the sake of a saving interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. The load of guilt was gone, and I felt that I had salvation through the blood of the Lamb.

The struggle was over, and my peace flowed as a river.

"Some unconverted, awakened sinner here may ask me, 'How about that promise?' I will answer. When my heart began to trust God I forgot all about the promise. I had all my heart desired in Jesus Christ. But God did not forget *that* promise though I did. Of this world's goods I have had all I could have asked and even more. But best of all, *I have been made alive unto Christ forever.* I am going home to die no more. For me it is not *death* to die. I thank God for that thirty-fourth Psalm; it led me to trust God through Jesus Christ."

"Oh make but trial of his love,
Experience will decide
How blest are they, and only they,
Who in his love confide."

CHAPTER XIII.

CHRIST IN ADVERSITY.

IN the *temporal calamities and adversities* of this life, the vicissitudes of commerce, the depression of trade, the pressure of want, it is equally our privilege to plead in prayer and faith this appropriate and precious promise of the Saviour, and invoke His interposition, succor, and aid. Our Lord, when on earth, never showed Himself indifferent to the *temporal* necessities of man. We read that He had compassion on the multitude because they had nothing to eat, and in the exercise of His sympathy, and in the interposition of His power, fed thousands with bread. He

is still the same. Have your commercial transactions met with a reverse? your enterprises with an untoward and unlooked for check? Are you actually under the pressure of want? your wife and your little ones crying for bread? Go in prayer, my brother, and plead in childlike faith this gracious promise of Jesus—"*Lo, I am with you alway*," and you shall not plead in vain. Ah yes! He has sent, He has permitted this calamity but to show you how near He is to you, how He will, as of old, tenderly compassionate your need, and then, in the boundlessness of His divine resources, abundantly supply it. See Christ, and Christ only, in your present distress. Bow uncomplainingly, cheerfully, to His will. Lean confidingly, unwaveringly, upon His arm. Trust His goodness, faithfulness, and power. And, oh, if this temporal calamity, this worldly sorrow, but draw your soul to

Christ, if now you are aroused to prayer, are led to turn to God, to seek spiritual blessing, the "bread of life," without which you perish, the "true riches" of grace on earth and of glory in heaven, through eternity you will praise the Saviour for the overwhelming calamity which saved your soul as by fire. Turn you now, amid crushed hopes, wrecked fortune, the biting and the cries of want, to Him whose providence can cause the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil not utterly to fail, and whose grace can so sanctify your affliction and chasten your sorrow as to make this present adversity the sweetest, holiest, costliest blessing of your life.

Yes! Christ is with you alway, all days; in the inexperience and temptations of your youth, to counsel and keep you; in the cares and anxieties of manhood, to sustain and soothe you; and in the feebleness, infirmity, and loneliness of old age, to be your staff and

comfort. Christ is with you in widowhood, to vindicate your rights and cheer your desolation; in your lone orphanage, to be to you as a father and a friend; and in all the adversities and vicissitudes of life, its changing scenes and dying friends; in the total absence of the kind sympathy for which you yearn, the affection for which you pant, the counsel and protection which you need, Christ will in your experience make good to the letter His precious promise, "*Lo, I am with you.*" Oh! to have *His* presence with you in these circumstances, you can well afford to part with all others.

You are, perhaps, anticipating a trial, and like the disciples in the transfiguration, you fear as you enter into the cloud, the portentous shadow of which is darking and closing around you. But how groundless were their fears! and equally so are yours. Christ was with them in the cloud, and a

Father's voice issued from its bosom. Never were they more honored or more safe. The same Christ, the same almighty, loving Friend is with you in the cloud which now you so much dread. Oh, trust your trembling soul to Him! Is it the heart's wrench you fear? Is it mental despondency you dread? Is it bodily suffering from which you shrink? Is it temporal loss you anticipate? "*I am with you alway*," is the soothing, assuring promise with which Jesus would have you meet it. He will strengthen, sustain, soothe, and comfort you with His blissful presence *at the moment* of the trial. Trust Him now? He never yet belied Himself, never broke this precious promise in a solitary instance. "*As thy day, so shall thy strength be.*" "As thy day!" His presence will dissipate the gloom, quell the fear, hush the murmur, deaden the suffering, and thus encircled by His arms, He will

bear you through it, to the eternal praise and glory of His name. Friend of sinners! Lord of saints! my trembling spirit shrinks, I fear as I enter into this cloud! Be Thou sensibly near. Let me *feel* Thy hand, *hear* Thy voice, *realize* Thy presence, then shall I fear no evil, for Thou art with me, Thy rod and Thy staff will support and comfort me. "*Lo, I am with you; I will be with you. Fear not.*" Enough, my gracious Lord! I will now enter into the cloud; I will gird me for the trial, and, supported by Thy grace, and soothed by Thy love, will glorify Thee in the fire.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

In all our distresses and adversity Christ is ever with us. The following is an example drawn from humble life:

In the Fulton Street Prayer Meeting a

few days since, a pleasant and venerable-looking stranger, arose and said, "While walking up Broadway yesterday, having lost my spectacles, I looked around to see where I could purchase a new pair. Finding a stand near, I stopped to select a pair. Noticing that the dealer was an intelligent man, who had evidently seen better days, I entered into conversation with him.

"'How long have you been engaged in this business, sir?'

"'Only a short time, sir. I have not always been so poor. I formerly lived in Charleston, South Carolina, and was in good circumstances, but myself and family were compelled to fly to save our lives. We barely succeeded in getting on board of a vessel about sailing for New York, and secreting ourselves in the hold. We had no time to save any thing, not even money enough to pay our passage.'

"'But how have you lived since you came here? You cannot make enough at this business to support your wife and children?'

"'God has cared for us thus far, sir. We had no money to pay rent, but we found a *cellar* up-town that we get for nothing, and my wife and I make enough to keep us in food and clothing. We are very thankful, very thankful to God, sir, that we came here.'

"'How, sir, can you be thankful that you were compelled to give up all your property, leave a pleasant home, and live in a cellar?'

"'Oh, sir, it is because we have found Jesus Christ since we came here, or rather, He has found *us*, and we are more happy and content than when we lived in our pleasant southern home; for though we *do* live in a cellar, JESUS CHRIST *is with us*.'"

CHAPTER XIV.

CHRIST IN DEATH.

CHRIST is with you—*in the hour and article of death.* Never did a believer in Jesus die alone! Alone he may be as to all human aid and Christian sympathy. But he cannot be really and actually alone; for, if ever Christ fulfills this exceeding great and precious promise: "*I am with you alway*," it is when His blood-bought, ransomed saint enters and passes through the shaded valley. He is with you to speak the promises, to mete out the grace, to stifle fear, to repel the tempter, to apply the blood, to strengthen faith, and to waken the echoes of the silent valley with

the music of His voice: "*I am with you.*" "Amid the prostration of earthly hopes, when unable to glance one thought on a dark future, when the stricken spirit, like a wounded bird, lies struggling in the dust, with broken wing and wailing cry, longing for pinions to fly away from a weary world to the rest and quiet of the grave; in that hour of earthly dissolution, He who has the keys of death at His girdle, nay, who has tasted death Himself, and better still, who hath conquered it, draws near in touching tenderness, saying, 'Lo, I am with you. I am with you to cheer you, to comfort you, to support and sustain you. I, who once wept at a grave, am here to weep with you; I will be at your side in all that trying future; I will make my grace sufficient for you, and my promises precious to you, and my love better than all earthly affection. The one is changeable: the one must perish; I am the

strength of your heart and your portion for ever.'" Blessed Lord!

> "Abide with me from morn till eve,
> For without Thee I cannot live;
> Abide with me when death is nigh,
> For without Thee I cannot die."

Oh! seek much, living and dying, of the sensible presence of Christ. Let this be the grand, essential character of your religion: a religion, the essence, the sunshine of which is, the conscious presence with you ever of Jesus. Walk daily at His side. Cultivate confidential transactions with Him. Suffer no sin to grieve Him, no distrust to wound Him, no coldness, shyness, or distance of fellowship to lessen one throb, to suppress one desire, to congeal one current, or to prevent one act of your love. As His disciple and follower, separate yourself from the world, and bear His cross after Him boldly

and uncompromisingly, yet meekly and heroically. Be happy in all His dealings with you; all that He sends or withholds, gives or removes; for He hath said, "*I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*" No! He will be with you until He brings you home to glory. Precious presence of Christ on earth! it is the dawn of glory, the earnest of heaven, the foretaste of celestial bliss, the first-fruits of the golden harvest of eternity!

ILLUSTRATIONS.

The writer knew the parents and grandparents of this dear young man, among his personal friends. The happiness of this devoted Christian youth might be expected from his life. Christ was with him in the dying hour.

Among the many noble young men who

have given their lives for the cause of human independence, we may class Jasper Stone Laughlin, who died in the twenty-third year of his age, at the West End Military Hospital, Cincinnati, Ohio, May 16th, 1862. He was an only son, born in McConnellsville, Ohio, of pious parents, where he spent nearly all his life, with his mother and sister; his father, who was a Ruling Elder in the Presbyterian Church, having died when Jasper was yet a child. It may truly be said of him that "None knew him but to love him." In the summer of 1858, he stood up for Jesus, and united with the Presbyterian Church. Such was his Christian deportment, that in 1861 he was elected and ordained a Ruling Elder in the same Church in which his father lived and died. His place was *never vacant*, when at home, in the Sabbath school, the prayer meeting, the public gatherings of God's people.

In the fall of 1861, under a deep sense of duty to his country and his God, after prayerfully considering the whole matter, and obtaining the consent of his widowed mother, he volunteered under Captain T. M. Stevenson, Seventy-eighth Regiment O. V. I., Colonel Leggett. He carried his religion with him. His Bible and Hymn Book were his daily companions. His captain in writing about him, since his death, says: "He was beloved by every one of his regiment. His conduct was so lofty and noble, his life so spiritual and heavenly minded, that the greatest despisers of religion were cowed before his very appearance. Once he said, 'I never before felt the power and importance of religion as I do here. Cut off from home and the public means of grace, I feel the necessity of leaning upon the Saviour, and committing myself entirely to a kind and good providence.' "

His regiment was at the surrender of Fort Donelson, and in the battle of Shiloh during the second day. After having passed through that fearful struggle, and enduring many hardships, he was found to be failing in health; so much so, that Capt. Stevenson determined to send him home. When the hope was held up before him that he would soon be conveyed to his mother and sisters, he replied: "I am going to a far better home than any on earth. Tell my mother and sisters that I die happy. I am entering the upper kingdom only a few days before them. They rejoiced when I came into the lower kingdom, how much more should they rejoice to have me enter the upper kingdom. Tell them to sing 'JOYFULLY' when they hear of my *high promotion* from the army, and the high service of my country, to the bright climes of bliss!" After he was placed on the boat at Pittsburgh Landing, May 7th,

he seemed to rally, and expressed himself as being quite comfortable. On the evening of the 9th, however, he felt that he was drawing near his "time to die," and being asked by his attending physician if he had any message to send to his friends, he dictated the following letter:

"*Dear Mother and Sisters:* I am just entering the glorious portals of eternity! Jesus has not yet made his appearance, but *I know* that He will. Do not regret that you permitted me to volunteer. The happiness of the present moment makes up for all the suffering I ever endured. I soon expect to see dear father, grand-parents, and above all, JESUS! One of the greatest objects of my gratitude is, that God has granted me the privilege of sending you this message from the chambers of glory. I never enjoyed myself so much as while in the army. You ought to be proud that you have a son

to fall in so glorious a cause as that of human independence. Tell our Church to be faithful unto the end, and get the glorious crown of life. Tell my dear pastor to continue in his faithful labors: that I know the blessing of God will follow them. Thank Mr. Chambers, the Baptist minister, for the interest he took in me at the good old Union Prayer Meetings.

'Joyfully, joyfully, onward we move' —

will be sung by me in nobler strains, in a short time, and

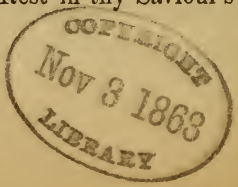
'Nearer, my God, to thee,
Nearer to thee:
Ev'n though it be a cross
That raiseth me,
Still all my song shall be,
Nearer, my God to thee,
Nearer to thee—I would be, and still nearer to thee.'"

He was conveyed to the West End Military Hospital in Cincinnati, where he was brought under the kind care of relatives and friends. Dr. Dodge, who, spent much time with him, in a letter says:

"He was perfectly rational as long as he had strength to articulate. Realizing fully that his work on earth was done, he departed with a confident assurance of meeting the Saviour. The memory of his example and faith in the Saviour will never be effaced from the minds of scores of sympathizing friends."

His remains were brought home, and interred by the side of his father.

"Soldier of Christ, well done:
Praise be thy new employ:
And, while eternal ages run,
Rest in thy Saviour's joy."



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